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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/896,446	06/30/2001	Balaji Srinivasan	42390P9594	8251

7590 04/24/2002
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EXAMINER

MAI, SON LUU

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2818

DATE MAILED: 04/24/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/896,446

Applicant(s)

SRINIVASAN ET AL.

Examiner

Son Mai

Art Unit

2818

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 June 2001 and 08 January 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to because in figure 3, the signal reference "RIN" indicating the output signal of the array side should read --SIN--. And in figures 4A and 4B, there are extra "EQUALIZATION PULSE" and "EQUALIZE PULSE" references. A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 20-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

As for claim 20, "a flash cell" in line 9 should read --a reference flash cell--to be different from a flash cell coupled to a first drain bias network in line 8. Also note that there should be only one period (.) at the end of the claim.

As for claim 24, "a persistent memory" in line 4 should be --a reference persistent memory--since "a persistent memory" has already been used in line 2.

As for claim 26, "a persistent memory" in line 3 should read --the persistent memory--since it refers to the "persistent memory" in claim 24.

Claims 21-23 and 25-26 are also rejected for depending on and including the limitations of claims 20 and 24 respectively.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 1-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Tanaka et al. (U.S. Patent 5,559,737).

The Tanaka et al. patent discloses all the limitations as claimed in the instant invention. In the embodiment illustrated in figure 2, Tanaka et al. shows a flash cell (transistor 1) coupled to a first drain bias network (comprising of elements 4-7), a reference cell (11) coupled to a second drain bias network (comprising of elements 14-17), an equalizing transistor (91) coupled to input nodes of the first and second drain bias networks for equalizing the potential thereof, and a sense amplifier (20) coupled to the outputs of the first and second drain bias networks. The method claims of the instant invention read on the circuitry of Tanaka et al. comprising equalizing input nodes of the first and second drain bias networks and sensing the voltage difference between the outputs of the first and second drain bias networks.

Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Tanaka et al. (U.S. Patent 4,884,241), Kumakura et al. (U.S.

Patent 5,519,652) and Fournel et al. (U.S. Patent 6,307,797) teach methods and circuits for equalizing and sensing voltage differences at output nodes of a flash cell and a reference cell.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Son Mai whose telephone number is 703-305-3497. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:00 am to 6:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Nelms can be reached on 703-308-4910. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-308-7724 for regular communications and 703-308-7724 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0956.

04-19-02


Son Mai
Examiner
Art Unit 2818